

**HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL
LITTER PREVENTION & RECYCLING
EDUCATION INITIATIVE**

SPRING REPORT

**Fiscal Year 2009
January 1, 2009 - March 31, 2009**



HR CLEAN

HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL LITTER PREVENTION & RECYCLING EDUCATION INITIATIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HR CLEAN is the recycling and litter prevention education program of Hampton Roads, and is a partnership through the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC). It is a regional coalition of local and regional clean community, recycling, and environmental education coordinators that promotes litter prevention, recycling, community beautification, and general environmental awareness through educational projects designed to reach all sectors of the Hampton Roads region.

HR CLEAN member localities continue to enhance and expand the level of awareness among Hampton Roads residents about the need to reduce waste, prevent litter, and participate in local beautification and recycling programs. Radio and local television advertisements are the main media sources. Secondary sources are local publications and web advertisements on the media station websites. Using a mix of targeted television, radio, and print advertising, as well as updated website materials, HR CLEAN continues to provide the region with quality information.

The 2009 Regional Conference was held February 27, 2009, in Smithfield. The topic was “Are Plastic Bags Sacking the Environment?” The impacts of plastic bag litter and ways to prevent it were discussed. The event drew over 80 participants and regional media coverage, including articles in the *Virginian-Pilot*, the *Daily Press*, and the *Smithfield Times*. The event was sponsored by Republic Services, Inc. and Toter, Inc.

HR CLEAN continues to be a regional partner in HR Green, the umbrella committee for all four environmental education committees, including Fat Free Drains (HR FOG), HR STORM, and HR WET (Hampton Roads Water Efficiency Team). The HR FOG regional committee works to prevent sanitary sewer overflows and backups caused by fats, oils, and grease improperly entering the sanitary sewer system through drains and grease traps. HR STORM promotes stormwater management and pollution prevention and HR WET promotes water conservation. The four committees work together to expand message reach through economies of scale. They also promote the HR Green Mini-Grant program.

FAST POINTS

- ❖ **HR CLEAN’s regional conference attracted over 80 attendees and regional media coverage.**
- ❖ **HR Green annual meeting generated many ideas and resulted in a group purchase of reusable grocery bags.**

- ❖ HR CLEAN attracts thousands of visits using free social networking tools under the umbrella of HR Green to spread HR CLEAN's messages to more individuals in Hampton Roads. The David Wright videos continue to be popular in the HRPDC YouTube video lineup.
- ❖ Radio and television spots continue to be broadcasted to over one million Hampton Roads residents. WVEC and CW Channel-27 continued to air the series of public service announcements that were developed with the help of the New York Met's third baseman, David Wright.
- ❖ The HR CLEAN Recycling Guide was downloaded 2,750 times from www.hrclean.org.

MEDIA

The HRPDC, on behalf of HR CLEAN, continues to contract WVEC, WGNT, and Metro Traffic. Channel-13 will air the HR CLEAN spots during peak viewing times of shows such as *The View*, *Oprah* and *Jeopardy*. A series of public service announcements that were produced by WVEC with the help of New York Met's third baseman, David Wright, in the winter of 2006 continue to air.

3rd Quarter Media Breakdown:

MEDIA	IMPRESSIONS	CLICK -THRUS	CTR
WVEC.com	74,561	26	0.04%
WVEC Project Green	64	11	17.18%
TOTAL	74,625	37	

The HR CLEAN website is enhanced and updated frequently with information received from members and gathered by staff. From the website, users are able to apply for an HR³ Mini-Grant, email local representatives, and learn about the 3Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle. Seasonal information and local recycling facilities are also found on the site. The following information was gathered for the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2009:

WEBTRENDS FOR JANUARY 1 – MARCH 31

- ❖ Visits – 9492
- ❖ Average Visits Per Day – 105
- ❖ Direct Traffic – 55%
- ❖ Visitors from USA – 73%

Most frequently viewed pages:

1. Virginia Statewide Litter Program
2. HR CLEAN Homepage
3. Recycling Drop-Off Center Locations
4. Mulch Mowing Information
5. Litter Law Fact Sheet

Most frequently downloaded pages:

1. Recycling Directory (2,750)
2. HR CLEAN Annual Reports (328)
3. Activity Pages from the Family Activity Book (198)
4. Litter Law Fact Sheet (190)
5. *We All Live on the Water* NIE (146)



The **number of visits** represents the number of times the site was visited by individual users. If an individual visited six times in the fiscal year, and clicked on ten pages each time, the number of visits counted would be six. Visits by non-humans (spiders, web crawlers, bots, etc.) were removed from the total number of visits.

The **direct traffic** represents traffic to the website in which the visitor typed the domain name directly into their browser, or the visitor bookmarked the site. The percentage of direct traffic returned to normal range of 55% after a spike to 92% direct traffic in 2nd quarter FY09.

Web traffic has decreased in the last couple years. The website will be undergoing a major transformation to better serve the public seeking information provided by HR CLEAN in Fiscal Year 2010. The Committee has begun utilizing Web 2.0 social media sites like YouTube and Twitter to draw more traffic to the site. Staff added META tags to the site code to improve search engine optimization and help more users find the HR CLEAN site. A page listing the Earth Day activities of participating communities was also added to attract more traffic. The effectiveness of these efforts will be analyzed in the next quarter.

Social Networking

In July 2008, HR CLEAN began using social networking tools to reach a wider range of Hampton Roads residents year-round. Ad campaigns on television and the radio are effective, but expensive. To supplement the existing media campaign, and to provide more content to web users, the HR Green committees began posting items to sites such as YouTube, Digg, Twitter, and Delicious.






YouTube



HR CLEAN posted video to YouTube at www.YouTube.com/HRGreenVA and www.YouTube.com/HRPDC. HR CLEAN's David Wright public service announcements draw traffic from YouTube searches, embedded video players on other sites, and other sources. From January 1, 2009 to March 31, 2009, HR CLEAN videos on YouTube were viewed 374 times. Traffic comes first from users in Virginia, followed by New Yorkers. YouTube is a free service that allows the committees to provide a visual message to those in Hampton Roads, year-round.

Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blogging site that allows users to post short messages to followers. Its use has exploded among the general population and moved beyond "early adopters." Messages can be sent or received using the internet, the computer desktop, or a cell phone. Individual users choose accounts to "follow", so those receiving the "tweets" are interested in the message content. HR Green set up an account at www.twitter.com/HRGreen or @HRGreen. Regular messages updating followers about programs, tips, events, and website content are distributed to users. Twitter users regularly follow links in Twitter posts directly to www.hrclean.org and other HRPDC sites. Since August 2008, @HRGreen has gained 320 Followers. A large portion of the Followers are from the Hampton Roads area. Other local government Twitter accounts also follow @HRGreen, including: @CityofVaBeach (City of Virginia Beach Media and Communications Group), @CVB (City of Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau) and @NorfolkKNB (Keep Norfolk Beautiful). Twitter users have contacted @HRGreen through the medium to find information on recycling locations and mini-grant programs.

The conversation below was read by many and directed over 70 click-thrus to the HR CLEAN site:

	bloominglater : @HRGreen i'd love to see a seminar on "how to recycle." hubby's from canada and appalled, but i don't even know where to go for cans, etc.
	HRGreen : @bloominglater @NorfolkKNB Recycling seminar is great idea. Recycling resources: http://twurl.nl/3t1djs (expand ----) and http://twurl.nl/ua7lqn (expand ----)
	HRGreen : @bloominglater A list of what your locality recycles is available here. http://twurl.nl/zf34io (expand ----)
	HRGreen : @bloominglater And here is a list of drop-off recycling locations by Hampton Roads community. http://twurl.nl/npt4dy (expand ----)
	HRGreen : @bloominglater For items your locality does not recycle, check the HR CLEAN recycling directory. http://twurl.nl/aiim62 (expand ----)

	bloominglater : @HRGreen fantastic! does one of those links tell me how to recycle paint? i haven't checked yet. thanks for the GREAT resources!
	HRGreen : @bloominglater Paint is collected at household hazardous waste (HHW) or household chemical collection (HCC). http://twurl.nl/4d7coe (expand-----)

Through Twitter, HR Green’s followers receive approximately five messages per week. @HRGreen has sent out 150 trackable messages resulting in 2367 click-thrus from Twitter to a site link provided. Each post receives an average of 16 click-thrus, directly increasing site traffic to the HR Green websites and the YouTube account. Of those, 816 click-thrus went to HR CLEAN content, the equivalent of approximately one week of site visits.

Topical Campaigns

- Plastic Bags** – Several members of HR CLEAN participate on the Plastic Bag Advisory Council which was formed because of the negative impact of littered plastic bags on crops and farmers. HR CLEAN maintained ties with the Advisory Council while planning their own plastic bag regional conference. The effort was led by Lorna Frazier-Lindsey (Gloucester), Mayi Henriquez (Newport News), Tammy Rojek (Williamsburg), and Ralph Anderson (Isle of Wight). The conference topic was “Are Plastic Bags Sacking the Environment?” The event was held at the Smithfield Center on February 27, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Over 80 individuals attended the event which was covered by the local media. Articles appeared in the *Daily Press*, the *Smithfield Times*, and the *Virginian-Pilot*. Conference presentations and articles were posted to www.hrclean.org. The event was sponsored by Republic Services, Inc. and Toter, Inc.
- Promotional Materials** – More promotional items were distributed during the third quarter 2009 than during the same time period in 2008. HR CLEAN has not reordered items since 2006 due to budgeting priorities. The committee has begun researching new promotional items to distribute at events to help keep the HR CLEAN name before the public. The committee will be purchasing reusable grocery bags with HR Green. Below is a list of items distributed in the third quarter of FY09 and in the previous fiscal year. Additional HR CLEAN promotional items distributed through the HR WET trailer are not included.

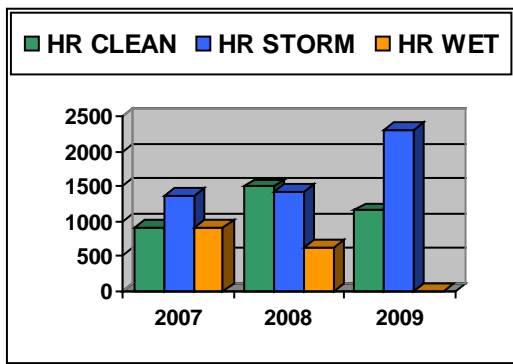
HR CLEAN PROMOTIONAL GIVEAWAYS		
ITEM	Jan – Mar 08	Jan – Mar 09
FAB	511	4680
Litter Fact Sheet	0	25
This Kid Fights Litter Stickers	0	0
Total	511	4705

HR GREEN PARTNERSHIPS

HR CLEAN continues to be an active partner with Fat Free Drains (HR FOG), HR STORM and HR WET, the HRPDC's other three other environmental education committees. Combined, these four committees form HR Green. By combining messages, the committees are able to save resources by pooling funding for a larger media impact.

Newspapers in Education (NIE) – While the copies of the *We All Live on the Water* NIE piece have all been distributed, the publication remains popular. HRPDC staff receives several requests each month for the piece and over 900 copies were downloaded from HR Green websites in the third quarter. HR Green committees are exploring reprinting the piece for distribution to fourth grade students in fall 2009.

Mini-Grants – HR Green also offers the region joint programs such as funding through the popular mini-grant program and educational print pieces. With the Mini-Grant Program, schools and youth groups are eligible to receive up to \$500 toward environmental projects that meet the goals of HR CLEAN, Fat Free Drains, HR STORM and HR WET. (HR CLEAN offers up to \$250 per project.)



In the third quarter, HR Green awarded \$1,900 to five different youth groups working on projects related to the missions and goals of the committees. Through participation in the HR Green Mini-Grant program, 140 Hampton Roads youth were reached. HR CLEAN did not award any projects in the third quarter of FY2009.

HR Green Annual Meeting – Members from all four committees met for an all-day meeting to discuss areas of message crossover and brainstorm ways to work together to improve message reach. The committees decided to purchase reusable bags with the HR Green logo and web address on one side and the four committee logos on the reverse side. The group purchase will reduce the cost of a reusable bag order for all the committees. The reusable bag is particularly relevant to HR CLEAN because of its involvement in the Plastic Bag Advisory Council, school plastic bag recycling projects, and the organization of the plastic bag conference.

Member Representation – Members of HR CLEAN also represent the region on various national, state and local committees such as:

- The National Recycling Coalition (NRC)
- North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE)
- Keep America Beautiful (KAB) and Keep Virginia Beautiful
- The Virginia Recycling Association (VRA)
- The Virginia Council for Litter Prevention and Recycling

- The Litter Control and Recycling Fund Advisory Board
- Hampton Roads Alliance for Environmental Education (HRAEE)
- Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)
- American Public Works Association (APWA)

CONCLUSION

HR CLEAN member localities continue to enhance and expand the level of awareness among Hampton Roads residents about the need to reduce waste, prevent litter, and participate in local beautification and recycling programs. Education and awareness of these environmental needs remains a goal of HR CLEAN. “Hampton Roads is Too Good to Waste” and HR CLEAN is committed to educating local citizens and visitors about the importance of keeping Hampton Roads beautiful.

